

Q. David did. [*Laughter*]

The President. I was just kidding about the French thing. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:15 a.m. at the Cape Arundel Golf Course. In his remarks, the President referred to White House Director of Photography Eric Draper. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on the Situation in Afghanistan and an Exchange With Reporters in Kennebunkport

July 6, 2002

Assassination of Vice President Haji Abdul Qadir of Afghanistan

The President. Today Vice President Qadir of Afghanistan was gunned down. The administration and our country mourns the loss of a man who desired freedom and stability for the country he loved. We have been in touch with Chairman Karzai, expressed our deepest condolences to the Chairman and the Government and people of Afghanistan, who lost a good and valued friend.

The Afghan Government is in the process of investigating who might have done this. And we are more resolved than ever to bring stability to the country so that the Afghan people can have peace and hope.

I'll answer a couple of questions.

Q. Mr. President, did you personally call Chairman Karzai? And what does this say about the ability of a new Government to form and actually succeed there, and what are your concerns?

The President. No, I haven't spoken to Chairman Karzai yet. I spoke to him yesterday, interestingly enough, to express our condolences about the loss of life during the military action. He was talked to by a member of my national security team.

I am confident and I believe Chairman Karzai is confident that with patience and with aid and with a proper strategy, that Afghanistan can develop into a peaceful and hopeful nation.

Bombing of Afghan Civilians

Q. Sir, what do you say to the Afghan people who are upset about the bombing of civilians?

The President. Well, I say, you know, we're investigating. I say "we." Both the Afghanistan Government and the United States Government are investigating to find out the facts. But I can say to the Afghan people exactly what I told to Chairman Karzai, "Any time innocent life is lost, we're sad. Our country values life, all life, and we'll find out what the facts are and then address it accordingly."

Assassination of Vice President Haji Abdul Qadir of Afghanistan

Q. Can the United States or the FBI or someone help with the investigation of the assassination, or will they?

The President. Well, we'll find out. Right now the Afghan Government believes they can handle the investigation. There's all kinds of scenarios as to how the—who killed him. But we'll work closely with the Government if they want us to.

Q. Sir, is there any sign that this kind of assassination may be connected to terrorist groups who are trying to get more involved in the country?

The President. It could be that. It could be drug lords. It could be longtime rivals. Who knows? All we know is a good man is dead, and we mourn his loss.

All right, thank you all. Thanks.

President's Birthday

Q. Birthday plans, sir?

The President. Let's see, settling in, a family lunch, may go for a run—it will be a mechanical run, however.

Q. Why, not hot enough?

The President. No, I wish I could get off the Point, but I think the agents will say today it's probably best for me to stay on Walker's Point.

Let's see, what else will be happening? Who knows? Maybe a surprise party. [*Laughter*] Other than that, just hanging out with my family, which is a wonderful gift unto itself.

Thank you all.

President's Round of Golf

Q. What took you so long to play 18 holes—just 2 hours and 10 minutes?

The President. Well, I think it's because I three-putted too many greens. [*Laughter*]
Have a good day today.

Q. Happy birthday, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:36 a.m. at the Cape Arundel Golf Course. In his remarks, he referred to President Hamid Karzai of the Transitional Authority of Afghanistan.

The President's Radio Address

July 6, 2002

Good morning. This week, Americans are celebrating the 226th anniversary of our independence. On the Fourth of July, we count our blessings, and there are so many to count.

We are thankful for the families that share our life in this land of liberty. We're thankful for the opportunities given to us every day in this country. We are thankful for our freedom, the freedom declared by the Founding Fathers, defended by many generations, and granted to each one of us by Almighty God.

Americans know that our country did not come about by chance. Our Nation was first designed as a colony, serving an empire and answering to a king. The Founders had other things in mind. In the summer of 1776, they declared that these colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent States. All Americans can draw a straight line from the free lives we lead today to that one moment when the world changed forever.

From that day in 1776, freedom has had a home and a defender. Unlike any other country, America came into the world with a message for mankind, that all are created equal and all are meant to be free.

There is no American race; there's only an American creed. We believe in the dignity and rights of every person. We believe in equal justice, limited government, and the rule of law, personal responsibility and tolerance toward others. This creed of freedom and equality has lifted the lives of millions of Americans, of citizens by birth and citizens by choice. This creed draws our friends to

us, sets our enemies against us, and always inspires the best that is in us.

In this 226th year of our independence, we have seen that American patriotism is still a living faith. We love our country only more when she is threatened. America is the most diverse Nation on Earth. Yet, in a moment we discovered again that we are a single people; we share the same allegiance; we live under the same flag; and when you strike one American, you strike us all.

More than ever in the lifetimes of most Americans, our flag stands for a true united country. We've been united in our grief, and we are united in our resolve to protect our people and defeat the enemies of freedom. At this hour, more than 60,000 American troops are deployed around the world in the war against terror. Many of you have family members serving in the military. Wherever they are stationed, this Nation is depending on them, and you can be proud of them.

America's service men and women and our veterans know better than anyone that our love for country is shown in works. That spirit of service is alive and strong in America today. As we fight a war abroad, at home Americans are answering the call of service, giving their time and energy to causes greater than self-interest. This Nation is confronting a terrible evil, and we are overcoming evil with good.

Today, as much as ever before, America bears the hopes of the world. Yet, from the day of our founding, America's own great hope has never been in ourselves alone. The Founders humbly sought the wisdom and the blessing of Divine Providence. May we always live by that same trust, and may God continue to watch over the United States of America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:17 a.m. on July 3 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.